

Trade - G. B. V. 12.5

THE
EXPEDIENCY
OF A
FREE EXPORTATION
OF
CORN
AT THIS TIME:

With some OBSERVATIONS on the
BOUNTY, and its EFFECTS.

To which is added
An APPENDIX, in Answer to a Pamphlet
lately published, entitled
'THOUGHTS
'Upon several INTERESTING SUBJECTS.'

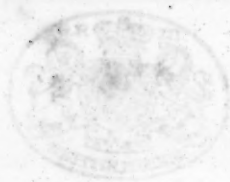
By the Author of the FARMER'S LETTERS
to the People of England.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for W. NICOLL, No. 51, in St. Paul's
Church Yard. MDCCLXX.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]



T H E
E X P E D I E N C Y

Of allowing the
EXPORTATION OF CORN, &c.

THE Legislature of these kingdoms having lately passed a temporary act to prohibit the Exportation of Corn, that time may be gained for a due consideration of the expediency, either of continuing the embargo, or allowing exportation; I shall venture a few observations on the subject, and endeavour to elucidate those circumstances, which at present call most for the attention of those whose situation gives them a voice in the decision of so important an affair.

No law, however manifest and acknowledged its utility, can ever be expected to pass without exciting the dissatisfaction and clamour of such as are, or think themselves, injured by it. The allowing a free export from this kingdom, and

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the granting a bounty on it, at certain prices, have of late occasioned numerous disquisitions :——we have had divers papers and pamphlets published against such measures : every art——every fallacy has been used to misrepresent the real tendency of such laws ; and as they do not admit a mathematical proof in the demonstration of every tittle of their excellence, some impartial men have questioned their propriety ; which, as in other cases of the same sort, has occasioned an echoed clamour from such as are, or believe themselves to be interested ; with no slight contributions from others, who chuse, whatever the subject, to offer their opinion on the talk of the day. Were the whole a matter of amusement, or of but slight importance, the consequences would not be feared, but when the most capital interests of the state are concerned, it much behoves every man to be cautious of too quickly determining on which side of the question to arrange himself.

I have in another place * endeavoured to prove, that the corn trade of Britain is,——I beg pardon, *has been* one of the

* *Farmer's Letters*, second edition, page 51.

most valuable she ever possessed; that it has, since the bounty was first granted, brought immense sums into the kingdom, near forty millions sterling to the year 1765: I have there shewn how infinitely valuable this trade has been as a branch of commerce: but as the severest enemies of the bounty, either assent to such indubitable facts, or pass them over, I shall confine myself at present to the other effects of these measures; and which are now the most agitated.

It is asserted, That the old corn laws raise the price of bread, and provisions in general——

Which occasions the high price of manufacturing labour——

And thereby causes the loss of trade by competition with foreigners whose men work cheaper.

This is the train in which the argument has so often been thrown. It looks pretty enough, and seems consistent to those who will for ever plague themselves with theories and never recur to facts.

The gradation of the prices of wheat at Windsor for 169 years is as follows.

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	Years	£.	s.	d.	Years	£.	s.	d.
From 1594 to 1612	19	2	2	5	69	2	8	5
1613 to 1637	25	2	7	4				
1638 to 1662	25	2	15	8				
1663 to 1687	25	2	5	3	25	2	5	3
1688 to 1712	25	2	8	5	75	2	2	5
1713 to 1737	25	2	0	7				
1738 to 1762	25	1	18	2				

This little table shews the real state of prices *, and proves upon the whole, that the bounty on the exportation (which began in 1688) has caused a regular decline of price. If exportation, and the bounty *raised* the price—when both ran at the highest ever known, we must surely look for its effect?—the following table will answer this quere.

Years.	Bounty.	Price.
1746 ———	99,388 —	1 19 0
1748 ———	202,637 —	1 17 0
1749 ———	228,566 —	1 16 0
1750 ———	325,405 —	1 12 6

* 1763 ———	2 0 9	Average	£. s. d.
1764 ———	2 6 9		
1765 ———	2 14 0		
1766 ———	2 8 6		

Which is less than many of the preceding periods ; is undoubtedly a moderate rate, and under what *was* the parliamentary price : Yet has it occasioned much murmuring. Why ? Because murmuring and riots have been regarded : —no fear of your having enough of them.

Here we find the price falls at *home* in proportion to the quantity sent *abroad*.

But it is asserted *, that the comparison between the prices of wheat at different periods should be confined to 20 years before, and 21 years after the bounty; in which periods it is (falsely) said, that wheat arose 6*d.* per quarter on the bounty: but the same *candid* author chuses to forget an argument that has more than once overturned this mistaken idea. In the 25 years *before* the bounty, a duty was first laid on the importation of corn, which with two others afterwards amounted almost to a prohibition: these measures partook so much of the nature of a bounty, that wheat, which had for many years been rising, then dropt 10*s.* a quarter. So that such a comparison would be absolutely inconclusive. It is principally for this reason that the decline of price in the last 75 years of the above table, is so much less than the fall from the first period to the second. It is of the same

* Considerations on the Exportation of corn.
1770. page 35.

period,

period, and in the same stile that another*, after the minuteness of a folio of calculation, tells us from the low price of corn in the reign of James II, that *patience* would have brought on a plenty, and a cheapness of grain——*without any expence to the government*: tacitly giving up the point which he has so laboured to defend: by owning that the *plenty* and *cheapness* was brought on; though *with* an expence to government.

In another place†, he says, the proper period for comparison, is the reign of James I. that is, an age in which interest of money, was $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and the commerce and riches of Britain contemptible, compared with what they have been since the bounty was granted: what trifling to compare the prices of wheat between two periods, in one of which, land sold at 14 years purchase, in the other at 30!

But whence comes it that these and numerous other writers should be so extremely desirous of proving that wheat

* *An Enquiry into the prices of wheat, malt, &c.*
p. 61.

† Page 43.

has been dearer since, than before the bounty——though the excess they strive for, amounts only to 6*d.* a quarter? this point being aimed so much at, shews plainly that they think it of the utmost importance. But what say they to the rise of every thing but wheat? Why has the interest of money fallen?—the rent of land,——rates of beef——mutton——pork —— manufactures, &c. risen so high since the revolution? why because the riches of the nation have increased, consequently the value of money fallen: but as this cause is equally applicable to wheat, as to other commodities, how comes it that that should, instead of rising, have sunk,——or, to grant the positions of these writers, have arose only 6*d.* a quarter?

The interest of money marks the increase of commerce, of income, of wealth; and in a word, of that aggregate improvement which raises all prices. In the fourscore years, from 1524 to 1604, interest was 9*l.* 16*s.* per cent. the fall to 1760 has been gradual and regular, to 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*; or about one third of the former height; whereas the price of land was, about the first period, 10 years purchase,

chafe, and in 1760 about 30, which is exactly in proportion to the interest of money. In the 30 years from 1660 to 1690 interest was £7 6 6, and land at $22 \frac{1}{2}$ years purchase, beef and pork were about 1 s. 2 d. per stone, and mutton 1 s. 4 d.: whereas from 1730 to 1760 beef and mutton were 2 s. and pork 2 s. 6 d.

The rise from the first 30 } years to the second is in beef	71 per Cent.
Ditto in mutton - - -	50 per Cent.
Ditto in pork - - -	114 per Cent.
Medium - - -	78 per Cent.
Medium of mutton and beef	60 per Cent.

Interest is fallen just an half, which bears no unexact proportion to this rise of mutton and beef; which are perhaps better guides than pork, from the variations in the amount of the navy.

From hence we have the greatest reason to judge, that wheat should be in the same predicament, unless some peculiar measure had been used with it. In the 30 years preceding 1690, the price was £1 16 3; the rise of 60 per cent, would have made it in the last 30 years

years	-	-	-	-	£	2	17	11
Whereas it was only	-	-	-	-		1	9	5
So that the fall in the price					}	1	8	6
has been	-	-	-	-				

That I fix upon the period which makes the least for my argument (according to the ideas of these writers themselves) will appear from the height of the bounty, in that ending in 1760; for in those 30 years no less was paid in bounty than £3,613,115, whereas it never arose in any other 30 years to more than £1,800,000, and yet, notwithstanding the exportation of such immense quantities to *starve our own poor*, did wheat stand at £1 8 6 *lower* price than it ought to have done according to the rise of every thing else: I say *every thing*, for tho' I have calculated from beef and mutton—yet labour, rent, cattle, &c. &c. — all are risen as high, and some much higher.

But it is said that the bounty has been the occasion of that *general* rise, for if you make a scarcity in one article of food it will heighten all the rest. This it must be confessed is a very curious argument — for, granting a false position, how

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very consonant to common sense, does it sound, that the exporting immense quantities of one sort of food should raise that sort only 6*d.* in forty three shillings, which is not $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and yet raise other articles 60 per cent! — Such is the reasoning of these writers; but there is no necessity to take them from their slippery ground of falsified facts to fight them fairly with the weapons of reason. I have shewn from facts that the position is false — that the exportation could not possibly *raise* the price of beef, mutton and labour, while it *sunk* that of wheat — and this upon their own principles, which are just, however false their conclusions may be, that raising the price of one article of food collaterally raises all others.

This opens a new view of the subject; wheat has fallen *greatly* since exportation: this is the real fact: nor could it so regularly happen, without having the effect of *sinking* the rates of the other articles of provision: so that we do not see the prices which beef, mutton, &c. would have yielded had no bounty taken place — the rise, instead of 60 or 70, might probably have been 100 per cent. —

It has been said, how can such large quantities of corn be annually exported, without the farmers being thereby encouraged to break up pasture lands too much, for the converting them to the raising of corn: And that farmers make 70 per cent. profit by the bounty. It is here again taken for granted, that their encouragement arises from high prices. But in answer to this observation I must first observe, that the way in which the bounty has encouraged and raised the agriculture of Britain to its present height, has not been by *high* prices, but by *regular* prices. That corn has been the cheaper for the bounty, is a fact indubitable, and that will admit not of contrary proof in whatever manner facts are distorted: the profit of the farmer has therefore been the regularity of price, and the certainty of no foreign competition in his own markets. Before the 25 years preceding the bounty, prices, tho' very high in the average, were yet uncommonly low in certain years, even to 25 s. a Qr. — And the ruinous mischief of this, was the circumstance of such low prices being as often occasioned by importations from abroad, as by bad crops at home, so that when the farmers ought

to have had an high price, they received frequently a very low one. No height of price apparent in an average of many years could make amends for such fatal fluctuations: for the business of agriculture being in general carried on by men with very small stocks in trade, regularity of price is by far the most advantageous circumstance to them, or at least an exclusion of *low* prices. —

Attributing the high price of butcher's meat to the advantages reaped by the farmers from the exportation of corn, is an extreme false idea. Great quantities of beef arise from two sources, SUMMER GRAZING on *rich* meadow and pasture — and WINTER GRAZING on turneps, oil cakes, and various other articles of food. Now let me ask any unprejudiced man, how the greatest advantages in raising corn can affect either of these sources. To talk of farmers ploughing up rich meadow and pasture land on account of advantages accruing from the culture of corn, is so manifest an absurdity, that it shews these writers to be totally ignorant of country business: Such land lets from 10 to 30*s.* an acre more than the arable adjoining — it is a likely matter, that

that landlords would allow *such* to be ploughed up!

The other source of the plenty of beef, viz. *winter fattening*, is indubitably enlarged by an increase of the culture of corn — it is even in exact proportion to it. Advantages in the corn trade, have occasioned very extensive tracts of waste lands to be inclosed and cultivated. But cultivated for what? Do they imagine for corn alone? Nothing farther. The corn laws have brought into culture more waste acres in Norfolk alone, than are sufficient to answer the whole exportation of Britain: and yet those acres have furnished Smithfield with a quantity of mutton and beef proportioned to that of their corn. Upon all those lands only two crops of corn are taken in six or seven years; their course being 1. turneps; 2. barley; 3. clover and ray grass from 2 to 5 years; 4. wheat: their flocks of sheep are consequently great, and the quantity of turnep fed beef sent to market every salesman in Smithfield will testify. Hence we find, that the bounty encouraging the growth of corn is not an encroachment upon grasses or on the other food of cattle, but actually increases both

both in an immense degree. Can these men possibly be so infatuated as to imagine that because corn is high, the farmer can sow all his land with corn, and every year? It is a most false idea. The increase of culture has been by breaking up wastes, which, as I have shewn, increases the quantity of beef as much as of corn: — It likewise acts in the breaking up indifferent pastures that have been badly managed, or that are upon an improper soil for grafs. Who imagines that such a conduct lessens the quantity of beef? It is an effect which mere general good husbandry requires.

The same assertions have been made respecting mutton. But not to be too diffusive in proving that light is not darkness — let me only remark that the same reply is applicable here as in the former case: but in a greater degree; for no instance can be produced of an increase in the culture of corn, that has not increased the quantity of mutton and the value of wool.

Pork is likewise produced as another instance, which is an admirable one to shew how totally ignorant these enemies
of

of the bounty are in its real effect. Increase the culture of corn, you lessen the quantity of pork: One can only smile at such reasoning. If I was certain that these people really knew a hog from a rabbit, I would take them into the yards of great corn farms gained from warrens and wastes, and ask them if they thought herds of some hundreds of swine, the number of which depends on the quantity of corn — lessened the quantity of pork? There is no end of answering such absurdities: can one believe that upon such crazy foundations, a sensible man could gravely assert* the rise of provisions *owing to the bounty*, to have amounted to £525,000,000.

* *Enquiry into the prices of wheat, &c.* p. 108.
 “ The large and extended gratuity given to export corn, had occasioned so great a quantity of land to be tilled, as lessened the means to raise other provisions.” *Ib.* p. 98. Another calculation tests the mischief done by the bounty in the article pork at a million per ann. *Considerations on the Exportation of corn*, p. 39. Whoever will take the pains to read all that has been written against Exportation, will find every argument knocking down its brother, and not unfrequently destroying itself.

I shall

I shall now come to the second general assertion of those who strive to prove that the bounty is the source of all our evils, moral and political, viz. *the raising the price of provisions, raises the price of manufacturing labour.*

To follow these gentlemen through all the mazes of their perplexity, would be useless: this argument carries in the face of it, its dependance on the preceding; for if bounty and exportation have *sunk* the price of provisions, as I think I have clearly proved they have, then the conclusion drawn in this argument is ipso facto false.

In the year 1767, I took a journey into Wales, the minutes of which I laid before the publick, under the title of *A Six weeks Tour*. I found in that journey, that there was not any proportion between the rates of labour and those of provisions. The year following I made a similar journey through the North of England, and found throughout above 2500 miles of country, that the rates of labour in no respect depended on those of provisions: Bread, butter, cheese and meat, being thrown into one aggregate price,

price, and the earnings of a family the same, the following was the comparison which arose.

<i>Price of Prov.</i>				<i>Labour.</i>		
Aggregate price of	2d.	$\frac{1}{2}$	}	51	8	0
per lb.	-	-				
Ditto of 2d.	$\frac{3}{4}$	-	-	51	3	10
Ditto of 3d.	-	-	-	53	2	4
Ditto of 3d.	$\frac{1}{4}$	-	-	47	16	0
Ditto of 3d.	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	50	1	11
Ditto of 3d.	$\frac{3}{4}$	-	-	50	17	11
Ditto of 4d.	-	-	-	50	10	8

Bread alone.

$\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb.	-	-	-	47	5	10
1d.	-	-	-	51	9	6
1d. $\frac{1}{4}$	-	-	-	51	17	11
1d. $\frac{1}{2}$	-	-	-	50	12	3
1d. $\frac{3}{4}$	-	-	-	50	12	11
* 2d.	-	-	-	51	16	4

Were the price of provisions the director of that of labour, these tables would be in exact degradation, but the contrary is as near the truth; so very far is the rate of the one, the rule of the other,

* *Six Months Tour through the North of England.*
Vol. 4. p. 459.

that they are mostly in opposition. Those who pay 4 *d.* per *lb.* earn less by 3 *l.* a year, than others who are fed at 3 *d.* The rate of 3 *d.* $\frac{1}{2}$ is attended by less earnings by 6 *l.* a year than 3 *d.* the *lowest* price of provisions; 2 *d.* $\frac{1}{2}$ is attended with 18 *s.* a year greater earnings than 4 *d.* the *highest* price. In bread alone, the man who pays 1 *d.* a *lb.* earns as much within a few shillings, as he who pays 2 *d.*: and he who eats it at a 1 *d.* $\frac{1}{4}$, more. In whatever view the table is thrown, the same contradictions appear; the very average of all — the table being thrown into but two divisions — is a flat contradiction.

The average aggregate price of 2 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{2}$, 2 <i>d.</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ and 3 <i>d.</i> being the three <i>lowest</i> prices — give the average earnings of	-	-	}	51	18	0
Ditto of 3 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{4}$, 3 <i>d.</i> $\frac{1}{2}$, 3 <i>d.</i> $\frac{3}{4}$ and 4 <i>d.</i> the four <i>highest</i> prices	-	-		49	16	7
Excess of the former				2	1	5
Average of the <i>four</i> <i>lowest</i> prices	-	-	}	50	17	6
Ditto of <i>three</i> <i>highest</i>	-			50	10	2
Excess of the former				0	7	4
						Turn

Turn and twist the comparison how you will, in no instance will you find that labour is high, because provisions are the same: you will in more instances find the reverse to be the fact.

In the same work, I compared the earnings of manufacturers with the rates of their provisions, and as little consonance was found between them; indeed the same reasoning is applicable to the one as the other.

If a man attempts to solve every difficulty that arises in the various combinations of this subject from mere reasoning, he will certainly meet with various contradictions that cannot be accounted for: labour *ought* absolutely to depend on the rates of provisions, and be regulated by them alone; but what ought to be, and what is, are here, as every where else, two very different affairs. In certain places and districts, provisions being much higher than usual — (whether the rate be reasonable or unreasonable) occasions a great clamour, and much rioting among the drunken idle part of the poor, who sometimes prevail so far, if they coincide with the private opinion of the

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neighbouring justices of the peace, as, either to gain a rise of wages, or an increase of poor rates ; but provisions falling in price, will lower neither the one nor the other, nor will they rise according to any proportion. A set of justices in any neighbourhood will have it in their power either to raise labour extravagantly, or to keep it as unreasonably low, if it was so before : the private conduct and opinion of parish officers and masters, will also have a great effect. When the changes of rates of labour are subject to such variations as exceed the utmost power of the keenest calculator to lay down in proportions, can we be surprized that so little agreement should be found between the present rates of labour, and the prices of provisions ? And with what degree of propriety can the enemies of the bounty clamour against it, for raising the price of labour, from heightning that of corn, when it in fact lowers the latter ; and in no case could possibly affect the former ?

One general proof of the truth of what I am now urging is the indubitable fact, that the price of corn has *fallen greatly* since the bounty took place ; it

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is equally certain that the rates of labour have *risen* ; how then, can one be said to be regulated by the other ?

It is much to be regretted that we do not find juster ideas of prices of provisions, which ought really to be reckoned high or low : the prices which have occasioned so much clamour, certainly have not been so high, on comparison with former times, as the value, and quantity of money might have made one expect they would rise to. What reason can be given, why the general harmony between prices of all sorts should be broken, in the instance of provisions and in no other ? Yet is not any article of food advanced out of proportion to the general rise of all commodities : labour since the bounty has doubled its price, whereas flesh meat is only 60 per cent. dearer ; and bread, the staff of life, is *cheaper*. Hence arises a great difficulty in drawing the line of distinction between high and low prices, for in fact they ought not to be denominated high, unless they exceed the proportion which commodities in general bear to the value of money. Interest since the bounty has fallen half, and yet the aggregate of provisions (allowance
given

given for the great importance of bread) certainly has not risen near a quarter.

But clamour takes its rise not from general, but particular comparison: *Provisions are dearer now, say the poor, than I ever knew them; they are dearer this five years than they were the last ten; this is the consideration that pinches: no matter what the rates are. I have been used to have them cheaper, and so I am determined to be discontented. Four pence a pound is too dear. Why is it too dear? Because I have been used to three pence. It is in vain to urge the rise of labour — or to instance the advances in every commodity under heaven; where private interest is so strongly concerned, prejudice will have place.*

But when there is no sort of probability of the prices of provisions raising to any thing like the proportionate rates of other commodities, why should we be so very solicitous for altering those valuable corn laws, which have been proved to be of such great importance to the welfare of this country. Parliament in 1688 thought 48 s. a proper bounty price; were we to take the rise of labour, of other

other commodities, or the rate of interest for our guide, the exporting price *now* should be much higher ; instead of which it is clamoured that no bounty at all should be given : how wisely the Legislature must judge.

Were the bounty discontinued for ever, the effect would undoubtedly be the *average* price of corn *rising* ; an effect by no means objectionable, were the prices to be regular : but the misfortune would be a certainty of variation. Those who urge a total repeal of the bounty, *to make corn cheaper*, talk against all principles : there cannot with sensible men be a shadow of doubt, but that the more you encourage the growth of corn for exportation, the more you will have for home consumption. Is beef too dear ? would you make it cheaper ? give a bounty on the exportation of it : where is the real politician that will assert your making it the dearer ?

Lastly, I come to the conclusion, that the high price of labour ruins our manufactures. And I will venture to pronounce this, as mere a vulgar error as the rest. I have never omitted any opportunity of gaining information on these points,

points, from the most able manufacturers I have met with: all agree, that the idea of our being underfold by the French, is false: they on the contrary assert (particularly the manufacturers of Manchester) that wherever they met the French, with the same goods, they underfold them: but the effects which follow from family alliances, and the intrigues of courts, should never be confounded with the price of a manufacture. Often has it been affirmed, that the French have underfold us in all the markets of Spain, at the very time that higher duties have been laid on the goods of Britain, than on those of France; and numerous other advantages given to the subjects of that crown. I shall not be surprized by and by to hear the bounty objected to because english manufacturers do not undersell french ones in the city of Paris.

Those who are so ready to talk of the ruin of our manufactures, should consider better what the ruin is, they harangue about. Except the unhappy consequences of American regulations, I know not a manufacture in Britain, that is not in the most flourishing situation: but that the aggregate of them is highly prosperous,

prosperous, cannot for a moment be doubted. The evil therefore which these writers pretend to explain, has no existence: they think themselves such masters of reasoning that they raise monsters of the imagination, for the mere pleasure of logically accounting for them.

But in the name of common sense, where are the facts, and what are the reasons, that prove a high rate of provisions, an enemy to manufactures? It is a matter indeed that has been taken so much for granted, that these gentlemen have disdained to exercise their powers of reasoning upon it: They give you an *ipse dixit*, to make what you can of.

It is a fact that this kingdom never made any advances in manufactures, that are worth speaking of, until provisions became what is called *dear*. Now although the rates of labour (as I before shewed) are not decided by those of necessities; to be in exact proportion to each other; yet in all countries, where provisions are very dear, labour must be dearer than in other countries, where provisions are very cheap. It was before found that provisions have advanced perhaps 20 or 25
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per cent. since the revolution ; but labour has advanced probably 100 per cent. I am not therefore guilty of a contradiction, in having asserted before that the price of labour does not accurately depend on that of provisions ; and in now advancing, that where provisions are comparatively high, labour will be so too : both propositions are true, because used in the supposition of different degrees. I repeat therefore, that such an high price of provisions, as must be attended by an high price of labour, is absolutely requisite for the prosperity of manufactures : living must be rendered dear before that general industry, which can alone support a manufacturing people, will be rooted amongst them.

There is not an instance in Europe of a country making great advances in manufactures, while such country continued under the possibility of labour being low. Dearness of living——high taxes——great riches——some causes or other, must have operated to render high rates of labour necessary. In those countries where manufactures make the greatest shoots, provisions are the highest: *viz.* Holland and Britain. Listen for a moment

ment to a writer of candour and penetration. " A Dutch manufacturer, pays
 " near one third of what he earns in
 " taxes; an English manufacturer, not
 " above one tenth, and from necessity
 " not above one 36th part of the pro-
 " duce of his labour. Such bread as our
 " people eat, is sold in Holland at 3 *d.* a
 " pound, and flesh at 9 *d.**." Notwith-
 standing such high prices, who will as-
 sert that manufactures are carried to
 greater perfection in countries, where
 provisions and labour are lower? Where
 is such a country to be found that exceeds
 the fabricks of Britain?

The importance of inforcing general
 industry, is so great; that without provi-
 sions being high enough to do it, manu-
 factures must go to ruin.

It is a fact well known through all the
 manufacturing towns of this kingdom,
 that the labouring poor work no more days
 in a week than are sufficient to maintain
 themselves: the remainder is spent in idle-
 ness. When provisions are very cheap, they

* *Considerations on taxes, &c.* p. 24.

are more distressed, and their families more unhappy than in the very dearest times ; for a man who wastes half his time in idleness, or perhaps in what is worse, will be a poor workman the other half. This is by no means to be wondered at: it would be surprizing, were the fact otherwise. Those therefore who would favour the manufactures of this country should take especial care, not to argue against what, they are pleased to call, the high price of provisions. The bounty having lowered the price of bread, would not have operated in favour of our fabrics, but on the account I before mentioned of causing a *regularity* of price, far exceeding any thing known before.

Upon the whole ; the arguments which have been used at various times against the bounty, and free exportation of corn, are all, either mistakes, or frivolous and trivial objections ; dictated either by interested men ; or by those, who through a false idea of charity, think the poor cannot be fed too cheaply,——and that the only bar to such cheapness, is the exportation. Such a diversity of opinions must always be found on topics that admit dispute ; but it is to be hoped, that
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the legislature will consider the subject quite independent of the influence of opinions so often mistaken——generally false——and in which such manifest contradictions are to be found.

This important point will soon be the subject of debate. *What should be done?* this is a difficult question, when the answer must be framed to avoid offending too harshly, the prejudices of a numerous party. I shall not presume to assert what ought to be done; but I shall venture to state some plans of conduct, which perhaps may not be liable to capital objections.

Considering the subject with a steady eye to facts——experience——and the principles on which the bounty was first given, I think there is great reason to adhere closely to it: this kingdom has risen infinitely in wealth, income and power, while her corn laws continued on that footing; and those laws have undoubtedly advanced her agriculture, and consequently the value, and rental of land, to a height unknown before——and to which they could never have arrived, had it not been for the influence of those laws;

laws ; which all Europe have admired as a master-piece of policy. The conduct therefore apparently the least exceptionable is to adhere to the general laws already made.—

But unhappily ideas very contrary to these, have been so much listened to, that suspensions of these laws—with absolute prohibitions of exportation—and even taking off the duties on importation——have of late been practised with so little ceremony, that we may expect the old laws to continue, but under a perpetual course of new patch-work : such a system I must be allowed to think much worse than a total repeal. The corn trade, for near a century, was the source of vast riches to this nation, and while prices were higher than at present : it was a regular object to many traders in the kingdom—and even formed nine tenths of the commerce of whole ports : such perpetual alterations, tend to destroy this trade—to throw the corn merchants into other pursuits—and in a word, to overturn all those noble effects, which that trade has so amply caused.

For these reasons, and many others, too numerous for the compass of a pamphlet, it is to be wished, that the corn trade be rather thrown on a total new footing, than remain the subject of such hotch potch work, as it has for some years past been liable to. I will venture to assert, that it had better be placed on an indifferent footing, than left on the best in the world, but subject to perpetual alterations.

There is not a variation that can be imagined, that might not be provided for in one comprehensive and immutable law.

At such a price—a bounty to be given.

At another price importation to be allowed with a certain duty for six months.

At a third price, importation to be allowed duty free for 6 months.

Exportation never to be prohibited, because by such prohibition you do not merely prevent your own corn being sent
abroad,

abroad, but you destroy the TRADE OF CORN. Why are your merchants to be cut off from a branch of commerce, which in one respect, has nothing to do with your object, but in another, may much assist it? While the Corn TRADE is permanently free, merchants may store it up from all quarters, and if the price in the mean time rises at home——home will have it: which is the grand principle of preserving an equality of price in any commodity. Without instancing Holland, in whose markets, corn scarcely ever varies, and merely from this principle; how can you want a commodity for your own consumption, which you make an article of trade? When corn is cheap at home, the merchant is not allowed to import (neither will he want it); when it is dear, he is allowed to trade as he pleases.

In such regulations I suppose the legislature to be desirous of keeping corn at an high (according to present ideas) but not an extravagant price: to think of keeping it low, would be so preposterous a conduct, that I shall not suppose the case.

If

If corn could be preserved permanently at a fixed price, I should apprehend the following rates, not an undue mean between the genius of our old laws, and the rage of novel ideas.

The best wheat, at 48*s.* a quarter.

The best rye, at 28*s.*

The best barley, at 20*s.*

I have supposed three variations of price : now if allowances be made for the fineness of the corn ; and those variations provided for ; quere if the stages in the price, and the regulations consequent might be upon a similar plan, with the underwritten.

A bounty of 5 <i>s.</i> a quarter on wheat, 3 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> on rye, and 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> on barley, each at the average quality, when at or under these prices ; to cease for 6 months, when they are exceeded : and if the excess continues at the end of	{	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Rye</i>	<i>Barley</i>	
		<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
		42	— 26	— 17	6

F

that

that 6 months, the	}	<i>Wheat</i>	<i>Rye</i>	<i>Barley</i>
suspension to conti-				
nue for another 6				
months, and so on.				

Importation with	}	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>
a slight duty when		45	— 28	— 19
they rise to — —				
—The variations to				
hold as above, for 6	}			
months.				

Importation duty	}			
free for 6 months, as				
above, when they ex-		50	— 31	— 21
ceed the price of —				

These prices are far lower than the former parliamentary ones ; — lower than they ought to be, if exportation was not always allowed, which is a point of the utmost consequence ; that it could, in no respect, be justly feared will appear, from reflecting that the ports being opened for importation, at prices by no means high, and a regular *trade* always carrying on in corn, a *supply* would ever be at hand, whenever *demand* arose : nor could the price of wheat ever rise higher in Britain, than among both the trading, and growing nations of Europe : for in
such

such case all exportation would stop of itself, and importation take place instead of it. Why have embargoes been so often laid on our exportation, when corn would have been sent away without a bounty? There is no sound reason can be given for such a conduct, but false and mistaken ideas of prices that ought to be esteemed high or low. The very state of the case proves, that corn was lower here than in other countries, or such could not pay our price, with our merchants profit and freight; and on what rational account, are you desirous of having corn cheaper here than elsewhere? It was on different principles that our ancestors reasoned when they passed laws, the wisdom of which we have *felt* for near a century; and heard, the object of Europe's admiration.

I again repeat, that *a free trade* is the foundation of these regulations, and of every other that can rationally be proposed; if a price is fixed at which exportation is to cease, (a most useless clause, as the balance of prices will ever effect it) or if embargoes are ever allowed——then the rates above mentioned ought greatly to be raised. If I was arguing

for an high price of corn, upon the average of the next 20 years, I would urge you to lay all possible restrictions on exportation — to annul the bounty ; and to allow importation duty free. What ! will the keeping our corn *at home, and increasing the quantity from abroad, make it scarce and dear ?* Doubtless, such an argument was advanced in 1688 : but reason, aided by long experience, converts a seeming paradox into a plain and self-evident proposition. We will suppose you to command an artificial plenty ; you import so much that wheat is at 20 s. a quarter, it is certainly cheap, but how long will it remain so ? The farmers can see nothing but loss in that culture, they will not sow it — oats, grasses, turneps, any thing pays better than wheat when at a low price. Thus you have next year a scarcity ; — this is unavoidable ; it may likewise be scarce among your neighbours — then your scarcity at once rises to a famine. This was the corn history of England before better ideas took place. It is at present, and always has been the case in all countries where the exportation is prohibited. In twenty years, to cast up the average price, we should find wheat at four or

five pounds a quarter, for it would rise to an equal height with other commodities, according to the value of money, as well as its immediate worth, under which rates it has hitherto been kept, by the operations of our corn laws. But we should have all the evils of high prices without the advantages, for our farmers would be ruined — *regular*, not *high* prices are their object.

Before I conclude, I shall venture an observation or two, on the landed interest, as peculiarly concerned in this important question. The gentlemen who have urged so many arguments against the bounty, have not forgotten their usual ingenuity when they touch on this head; they tell you, first, that your advantage will be best sought, by annulling your corn laws, for then, prices of all commodities will so fall, that an estate of five hundred a year, will be as good as a thousand. — Here, you find the bounty is your enemy; but turn a page or two further and he shall be your very good friend, for there you will find, But why are the interests of the landed part of the nation to get the better of all the rest?

Why

Why are rents to be raised to the ruin of manufactures ?

But not to lose time in answering people who scarcely ever advance a position without presently answering it themselves ; let it be remarked, that the rents of England have been greatly raised by the effects of the bounty, and free exportation. The regularity of the price of corn, has raised a great competition for farms in every part of the kingdom ; agriculture has been so animated with the advantages resulting from regular prices, that she possesses a spirit unknown before. In such a situation, who doubts that the interest of landlords is nearly concerned ? Is it possible that rents should not rise ? The fact has proved it. And the nobility and gentry may be assured that their truest friend is a regular price of corn, as *high* as is consistent with *regularity*, for then rents will not only be well paid, but farms will never be unoccupied : and let them break up and bring into culture whatever number of waste acres they please, tenants will not be wanting, let the quantity be as considerable as it may. These are advantages which one would think, should speak too feelingly to be effaced

effaced by the whipt cream of phantastic ideas: you may be promised heaps of imaginary profits: —— adhere to those which are real.

But we are further told, that in proportion to your profit, is the nation's evil: Strange doctrine indeed! The falsity of the assertion is sufficiently proved, in the preceding pages; but, a word or two to those who hold the landed interest of Britain so cheaply. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, most flourish, when most harmonized: none but fools would suppose their interest separate: but when the rage of party will draw comparisons, such odious parallels must be answered; the landed interest of this country, is of ten times the importance of all other interests, and this in every respect that could come into such an enquiry: wealth; income; population; stability. If interests are ever separately considered, it demands preheminance, and it ought, and must have it. But may it never be falsely thought to be raised, at the expence of either of the others, nor in return, ought any interests of commerce or manufactures absurdly to expect ad-

G

vance-

vancement, by lowering the value of the products of the earth.

A rise of rent, of only one shilling an acre, adds £1,600,000 a year to the total of England alone. When the advance of income is so great, and all attendant consequences so important, would it not be madness to hazard such advantages;—not for the good of manufactures;—but in compliance with wild notions, that have nothing but chimera for their foundation?

Keep the products of the earth at a regular price, and the higher the better;—you thereby are sure of increasing the value and rental of estates, and you at the same time give those advantages to manufactures, without which they never flourished.

APPENDIX.

A Person who thinks proper to take the significant signature of — MR. WIMPEY, has published what he calls a *full Answer* to the preceding pages; in the title to which, he asserts, in the common cant of all answerers, that *every fact is false, and every conclusion erroneous*. The general turn and manner of this answer, are too mean, and favour too much of low life to deserve animadversion; but as the shew of argument contained in this flimsy performance, may deceive unwary persons, I shall reply to that part only of this scurrilous pamphlet.

As to the abuse which is thickly interlarded through almost every page, it would make a very delectable nosegay for Mr. Wimpey's brethren to smell to: I present him for his pains, not the chaff of his crop, but the crop itself. Such as *assurance — self-sufficiency — expediency of spinning pages — fighting on without regard to truth or honour — palpable falsehoods — execrable reasoning and nonsense —*

incredibly ridiculous — reveries of a dis-tempered brain — all these elegances of “ratiocination, *” I shall leave to speak for themselves, not considering myself bound to reply in the Billingsgate stile, because abused by a fish-woman.

Previous to the refutation of the arguments in *The Thoughts*, I shall just observe that not a syllable advanced in that pamphlet is the author’s own: all is the transcript of twenty other publications; which Mr. Wimpey has had the modesty to retail, as the production of his own brain; I shall not therefore stick so closely to his work, as to the general arguments of John, Thomas, and Harry, as well as Joseph. For they belong equally to twenty owners, as to the aforesaid Joseph Wimpey. I know nothing original in the production, but the peculiarity of the abuse; an assistant, which is seldom brought in play when sound arguments are used to expose sophistry and mistakes.

The two general heads, under which the debate in question is to be arranged,

* Page 2 of the *Thoughts upon several interesting subjects*.

are, *first*, The price of corn before and since the bounty ; particularly whether it is risen or fallen since ; and, *secondly*, the propriety of resting in a free exportation without a bounty.

First, relative to the price of corn ; he has this passage, on my asserting that the bounty on exportation has caused a regular decline of price.—“ This I take the
“ liberty of saying, is not true, even
“ upon the authority of his own little
“ table ; which however is produced to
“ prove it. The bounty, he says, began
“ in 1688, by this table, the average
“ price of wheat from 1663, to 1687,
“ being twenty-five years immediately
“ preceding the commencement of the
“ bounty, was at 2 l. 5 s. 3 d. per quar-
“ ter ; but the next twenty-five years,
“ commencing with the bounty, the
“ average price was, by the same table,
“ 2 l. 8 s. 5 d. per quarter, which is an
“ increase of 3 s. 2 d. per quarter ; a
“ notable proof indeed, of a regular de-
“ cline of price, from the commence-
“ ment of the bounty. *”

It is by this sort of quotation that Mr. Wimpey endeavours to overturn the facts produced in the *Expediency*. What are we to think of an answerer, that quotes a general table, from which the author draws particular exceptions, endeavouring to account for them; and exhibits those exceptions without saying one word of the remarks offered on them. This, it must be confessed, carries on the very face of it, that candour, ever the guide of those, who treading on firm ground, despise all the paltry littleness of a quibbling argument. But to do the answerer justice, he is the mere transcriber of this argument, which was before advanced and answered in my *Expediency*, p. 7. The passage following that quoted by the answerer, beginning "But it is asserted," will sufficiently prove this. The circumstance of a duty being first laid on importation in the twenty-five years before the bounty, which, with two succeeding ones, amounting almost to a prohibition; is totally overlooked by this writer. Such a prohibition could not fail of acting upon the same principles as a bounty; that is, in lowering the price of corn; and the fact is precisely so, for in that

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twenty-

twenty-five years, corn is 10 s. 5 d. per quarter *cheaper* than in the twenty-five preceding. But the remainder of the table is sufficient to shew the fall of price.

	Years		l.	s.	d.
1688 to 1712	— 25	—	2	8	5
1713 to 1737	— 25	—	2	0	7
1738 to 1762	— 25	—	1	18	2

Now, according to the assertions and principles of the answerer, this apparent fall of price is quite fallacious; but I once more appeal to the common sense of every reader, if this is not an evident fall of price; if it is impeached by the objections copied by the answerer, which have been so often refuted?

Corn, since the bounty, has either been cheaper or dearer than before: do the enemies of the bounty openly and fairly venture to say, that it has been dearer, I assert from the plainest evidence, that it has been cheaper; the writer of the *THOUGHTS takes the liberty of saying this* is not true; but such unsupported assertions are easier made than proved.

Endeavour-

Endeavouring to shew the justness of my argument, I quoted the prices at home, when the *greatest* quantities were exported in the years 46, 48, 49 and 50; from which it appeared, that the price at home fell in proportion to such exportation; as a full reply to this argument, the answerer merrily asks, how then came the price to rise in 51, 52, 53, 56 and fifty-seven? and goes on; “Had
“ his reasoning been just, as in the year
“ 1750, the greatest quantity was ex-
“ ported ever known; consequently the
“ prices in 1751, should have been the
“ lowest known too, and have continued
“ on the decline; but the sad reverse has
“ happened, and wheat in six years,
“ from that period, has been at almost
“ double the price. Let him reconcile
“ this to the good effects of his admired
“ bounty, if he can.”

So, if I assert that wheat in those years, when exportation runs the highest, has been at the lowest prices, I am therefore bound to assert, that exportation in 1746, is to lower the price in 1757 — that in 1750 to sink the rate of 56; or, in a word, any year the answerer fixes on, is to affect whatever other year he is pleased

pleased to name; all this is merely quibbling on words. The letter, and spirit of my argument, were plainly this — Very high prices are solely owing to short crops, and never to the exportation. In 1749 and 50, we sent immense quantities abroad; did this prevent a short crop in 1757, occasioning prices to rise? Or will you pass the obvious reason, viz. a poor crop, to recur to the pretended one, exportation in former years?

But to set this matter in the clearer light, I shall state the comparison between prices and exportation in a fresh light, to shew that the idea I before started, is not so absurd, as the enemies of the bounty would have us imagine. I have already shewn the *regular* fall of price, from 1688 to 1762, in periods of 25 years each. The last 25, wherein are included the high years 1756, 7 and 8, about which the answerer harangues so much, — have so low a price as 1 l. 18 s. 2 d. so that these periods viewed at large as they ought to be, prove clearly, that corn in the period of the riots we heard so much of, and which brought so many complaining pamphlets to light, was cheaper than in any other period in the English history; and yet in these twenty-

five years the exportation ran the highest ever known; the comparison between the quantity exported abroad, and the price at home, will be seen from the following table, and that last inserted.

	Years		Bounty
1688 to 1712	—	25 —	£ 661,549
1713 to 1737	—	25 —	1,925,030
1738 to 1762	—	25 —	3,204,212

Here it evidently appears that the exportation, running very high, through a whole period, cannot have the effect of raising prices at home; for they are low in proportion to the greatness of the quantity sent abroad. The answerer speaks of the bounty in one period raising prices in ensuing ones — Does this table allow of any such idea? In the first 25 years £ 661,549 were paid in bounties; what effect had this in raising the prices of the next period? None; on the contrary, sunk 7s. 8d. per quarter. In the second twenty-five years very near two millions sterling are paid; such a great exportation, according to this gentleman, must have starved us, during the next period. But unhappily for his argument, instead of the price being higher,

higher, it falls again 2 s. 5 d. per quarter. And during the last 25 years, in which above three millions were paid in bounty, wheat was cheaper than in any former period. Plain and clear as these facts must be to an unprejudiced person; yet must we not think them sufficient to divert the settled purpose of a Mr. Wimpey.

He speaks much of the *sad reverse* of prices, after the years in which exportation ran the highest, and gives the rise of prices (page 19) from 4 s. 1 d. per bushel, in 1750, to 7 s. 6 d. in 1757, and then deals out the common phrases of wheat doubling its price. These worn out complaints are hacknied from pamphlet to pamphlet, till at last there may be persons, who will suppose the case once real; to clear the ideas of those readers who do not take the trouble of minutely examining facts, I shall give the price of wheat every year during the last period of 25 inserted in the above table; not the prices which the answerer invidiously transcribes, those of the very best wheat at Windsor market (with which the poor of this kingdom have as much to do, as with wheat in the moon) but the prices

of wheat of the mean quality, and at eight gallons to the bushel; whereas Windsor measure is nine. These distinctions should always be made, except when a writer aims merely at deceiving his readers.

The use of the Windsor table is to shew *proportions* between one period and another; and with that intent I have always used it; but when you speak of the prices of wheat relative to the state and condition of the poor, at certain periods, such prices are then useless; to talk from them of a *sad reverse*, is absolutely childish.

Price of wheat during the last period of twenty-five years, Winchester measure, and mean quality.

Years.	Price.	Years.	Price.
1738	1 7 8	1747	1 7 1
1739	1 9 11½	1748	1 8 9½
1740	1 19 5	1749	1 8 9½
1741	1 16 3½	1750	1 5 3½
1742	1 6 5½	1751	1 9 11½
1743	0 19 4	1752	1 12 6½
1744	0 19 4	1753	1 14 9
1745	1 1 5	1754	1 6 11½
1746	1 10 4	1755	1 6 4
			1756

Years.	Price.	Years.	Price.
1756	1 15 2½	1760	1 8 5
1757	2 6 8	1761	1 3 7
1758	1 18 11	1762	1 10 4
1759	1 11 0		

Average — £ 1 9 9 per quarter.
 Ditto — 0 3 8½ per bushel.

Now let me ask the candid reader, if there is the least reason for arraigning the bounty as raising the price of wheat? or for positively denying the contrary effect, as this champion in canvass, the answerer, is pleased to do? This is the period on which he gives the deepest groans: a period, wherein the price per bushel is on an average so low as 3 s. 8 d. ½. The highest year of all, 1757, the price is but 5 s. 10 d. and no other year so high as 5 s.

I repeat again that it is of very little consequence to overturn the futile objections of a person who copies them from other writings, more than once refuted; but it is of great consequence, that the publick in general should entertain just ideas of so momentous a point; and this good effect can only result from viewing the

the history of our corn trade and prices in every light.

Having thus endeavoured further to elucidate the real prices of corn, and shewed that they have ever been low at home, in proportion to the bounty granted on exportation; I should next reply to the assertion, that this falling of price is the *cause* of the bounty, not the *effect*; but that sophistry is sufficiently refuted in another place. If the bounty is but the *effect* of the cheapness; pray what is the *cause*? Why, says this writer *, “The great improvements that “ have been made in agriculture.” Now all this has been advanced by half a score of these gentlemen at least: I have given a reply already †. All these improvements were known and practised long before the bounty: why did they not work their effects before? The bounty occasioned a sure market, and a regularity of price, which set improvers to work.

I come now to the second general head: The opinion *that a free exportation*

* Page 36.

† *Farmer's Letters*, p. 71, 78, &c.

is sufficient without any bounty. What the answerer says on this head deserves very little note; but men of different abilities may possibly think the same; let us therefore examine the question.

At page 11, it is said by the answerer,
“ Give a free and unlimited liberty for ex-
“ portation, and it will flourish and prof-
“ per, as far as is reasonable and fit it
“ should.” But at page 18, the gentle-
man is quite of a different opinion, for
there he says, “ *When propitious seasons*
“ *have occasioned plenty, and filled the*
“ *markets, the price of course falls in pro-*
“ *portion thereto, and enables the merchant*
“ *to export corn where the prices run*
“ *higher; this trade continues as long as*
“ *our markets are full, and prices low;*
“ *but mark the event, your stock by this*
“ *means is kept low, and the first unkind*
“ *season, and scanty crop that happens,*
“ *advances the price in proportion to the*
“ *degree of scarcity, and none but a mad-*
“ *man could suppose that an immense quan-*
“ *tity exported the preceding year, could*
“ *operate as a means to keep it from being*
“ *higher, in a succeeding year of scarcity.*”

In

In the first passage, giving a free and unlimited liberty for exportation, is an excellent measure — But in the second, *mark the event*, says he, the tables are turned, and the case is very different; *scarcity will come — distress and famine will stare your people in the face* *.

What ridiculous trifling is this in a man, who pretends to prove another's facts to be all false, and his reasoning wholly erroneous !

Page 14, he says, “ *On these principles,*” free exportation but no bounty, “ *the sale is real and genuine, and the value received for the corn exported remains with you; but this is very far from being the case, when exportation is procured by a bounty; in this case I consider the foreign customer, as a kind of store-keeper or pawnbroker to Britain; in the first instance you give him from twelve to twenty per cent. to take the corn off your hands, which continues till an unfavourable year succeeds the drains the bounty has made; DISTRESS AND FAMINE THEN STARES YOUR PEO-*

* Page 15.

“ PLE IN THE FACE; *self-preservation*
“ *opens the ports, interest induces your for-*
“ *mer customers to bring back your own*
“ *corn, or perhaps corn of a much inferior*
“ *quality, and to let you have it again*
“ *upon the moderate terms of 50, 60, or*
“ *sometimes 100 per cent. advance. THIS*
“ *IS A REAL MATTER OF FACT, and*
“ *so it has operated ever since this wise,*
“ *this much applauded measure has been*
“ *adopted.*”

Distress and famine convey no explicit idea when spoken of the prices of British corn, we must look therefore for a more precise definition, according to this writer's ideas; we find it at page 38, where he says, *I hope, and am much inclined to believe we should seldom have wheat lower than 4 s. nor MUCH higher than 6 s. per bushel; prices by which the farmer could live comfortably, and which the poor could pay without being greatly distressed.*

Here we find that *distress and famine staring you in the face*, does not arrive when wheat is 6 s. a bushel; but the difference of that inflammatory term, from wishing corn not to be *much* higher than 6 s. a bushel, is so great, that we can
I scarcely

scarcely suppose he means less than 7 s. 6 d. to amount to *famine*: and 5 s. the average he would in general wish for. — His plain argument is therefore this, *giving foreign pawnbrokers from 12 to 20 per cent. to take your corn, raises the price in unfavourable years much higher than 6 s. or probably than 7 s.* And THIS, says he very emphatically, IS A REAL MATTER OF FACT.

Let the reader turn to the table of prices, in the last period of twenty-five years, and he there finds, as I before remarked, that wheat never arose above 5 s. 10 d. under the rate which he wishes wheat may never exceed! The mean price of the whole twenty-five years, so low as 3 s. 8 d. $\frac{1}{2}$; and but one year in the whole period that exceeds 5 s. — the very average he recommends! Distress and famine stare us in the face, because the price of wheat has been *lower* than this very modest answerer wishes it to remain at! *It is amazing to me, that any man will put it in the power of all the world to detect him of such a palpable falsehood*.*

* Page 25 of the *Thoughts*.

But further we are told, it is *a real matter of fact* (such matters of fact are extremely precious) *that we buy our own corn again at 100 per cent. advance*, in order to feed the poor people of England, when distress and famine are in their faces.

The year 1757 being the highest in price, it is what we can best reason on: that year we imported 130,343 quarters of wheat; the price of the year 2l. 6s. 8d. Now for foreigners to have bought that wheat of us, to re-sell it at 100 per cent. advance, they must have purchased it in the year 1745, and laid it by in their granaries for twelve years. So little does this gentleman enquire into the foundation of his *real matters of fact!* and yet he says this has been the case ever since the bounty.

But can there be a greater fallacy, than supposing the price of corn here to rise in proportion to what *has been* sent abroad? Wheat in 57, is 2l. 6s. 8d. a quarter, and we import 130,000 quarters. In 56 it is 1l. 15s. 2d. $\frac{1}{2}$, and we export 101,936 quarters. Who can think that the import of 57 is owing to the export of 56? Or, that it is within the

verge of possibility for the export of 101,936 quarters, to raise the price of wheat 11 s. a quarter, in one year! A failure of the crop, raised the price, and the effect would have been the same, had none been exported in fifty six.

But still it is said, *we sell corn to foreigners, and buy again at from 50 to 100 per cent. advance.* Granting this; pray what objection to it? When wheat is low at home, suppose 1 l. 3 s. per quarter, we sell at the price. Years afterwards it is 2 l. 6 s. we buy at that price. Where is the harm of this? Is it not the case with every commodity variable in price? The author reasoned as much to the purpose in talking of the bread and butter in Hudibras, as in stating such a mere fact, unless he proved from it, that the purchasing price was owing to the former selling one; according to his argument, you should keep your wheat at home, when at 1 l. 3 s. in order to prevent its rising hereafter to 2 l. 6 s. And this is precisely the Neapolitan and Spanish conduct: all the world knows the consequence.

But how does this agree with his recommending in another passage the giving

ing a free and unlimited liberty for exportation; let me ask him, if we should always buy and sell at the same price in that case? This is the candid reasoning of the very respectable Mr. Joseph Wimpey.

It has by other writers, much more worthy of attention than the author of the *Thoughts*, been asserted, that free exportation without bounty would be sufficient; but I apprehend this idea comes from viewing only one side of the object. These gentlemen allow the expediency of exportation — and encouraging the trade of corn, but they think the trade would work its own way. I will so far agree with them, that a free and unlimited exportation, without any bounty, would be preferable to the system we are in at present, of perpetually prohibiting all exportation; because such prohibitions tend strongly to destroy the trade of corn. But to argue partly on their own principles, it might be objected, that without the bounty we should often have plenty of corn, which they would allow to be sold, without a market to carry it to. Suppose Amsterdam buys all corn that does not exceed 30s. a quarter.

quarter. England has much to sell at that price ; and her government thinks it expedient to allow exportation. France sells at 29s. 6d. under the same circumstances : of whom will Amsterdam buy ? Not a bushel from Britain, but of those who will sell 6d. a quarter cheaper. These writers ask the use of the bounty : is an answer wanting ? It operates in forcing that market, which every party allows it expedient to sell at. This is the use of the bounty ; but not the whole use. A series of such operations which gave us the command of the corn trade till a different system took place : by forcing the market when a competition arose, our *trade in corn* was advancing towards that state, which a long train of excellent management had brought it to in Holland : — the creating a *regular* trade for merchants to speculate in, with no more interruption than the African, West Indian, or Spanish trades. The commerce of corn is A TRADE in Holland : not the business of factors, as in England. It is a trade which no prohibitions stagnate, as of late in England ; but regular enough for a merchant to throw a whole capital into, and deal in no other article. Holland, being a state
merely

merely commercial, requires no bounty to assist such trade; but England, which is the *growing*, as well as the *exporting* country, is in a different predicament; and our prohibitions, which of late have been so extremely wanton, have destroyed every idea of such *a trade of corn*.

Corn, in respect of a bounty, is the same as cloth, or any other commodity; England sells at 10 s. a yard, France sells at 9 s. the latter of course runs away with the trade; but England gives a bounty of 2 s. this at once turns the tables, and she in consequence commands the commerce. It is surprising, that a transaction which operates on the plainest of all principles, should have been confounded and perplexed in the writings of so many authors.

Here I rest my defence of the bounty, in answer to those who deny its expediency: before I conclude, I shall beg leave just to animadvert on a passage or two in the redoubted Mr. Wimpey's pamphlet, which are foreign to the grand points in the debate; but which he kindly drags in by neck and heels, for
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an opportunity of exhibiting his candour and penetration.

Page 20, he says, "*What he has advanced concerning the interest of money is not true; and his reasoning, or rather talk about it, is ridiculously absurd; how does it appear the interest of money is fallen one half? and that in thirty years, from 1660 to 1690, interest was 7l. 6s. 6d. when every body knows, that in the 12th of Charles II. 1661, the legal interest was no more than 6l. per cent. and continued so till the 12th of Queen Anne, when it was reduced to 5l. per cent. and has continued so ever since, so that instead of having fallen just one half, it is only fallen one sixth, or 1 per cent. in that period.*"

This passage is, I think, as curious a one, as will be met with in many a day: by a mere piece of jesuitism, he confines himself to the progress of *legal* interest, which has as much to do with the case in question, as the interest of money in China or Japan. What has this rate to do with it, while it belies the fact every day we live? Interest is now at 5 per cent. he tells us; and this he will by-and-by

and-by assert to be a *real* matter of fact:
The progress of real interest has varied
quite differently from the *legal* rate.

From 1624 to 1646	per cent.
it was at	£ 8 0 0
1645 to 1660	6 0 0
1660 to 1690	7 6 6
1690 to 1697	7 10 0
1697 to 1706	6 0 0
1706 to 1730	4 5 0
1730 to 1760 *	3 13 6

Here it appears that my assertion is true;
however *ridiculously absurd* it may be.

Page 22. We have another instance
of a most happy nature, to exhibit in the
true colours, the spirit of this candid an-
swerer. Quoting the preceding pam-
phlet, he transcribes — “To talk of
“ farmers ploughing up rich meadow
“ and pasture land, on account of advan-
“ tages accruing from the culture of corn,
“ is so manifest an absurdity, that it
“ shews these writers to be totally igno-
“ rant of country business.” — [Thus
far he quotes but chuses to stop, and not
take the following passage. I go on —

* *Enquiry into Prices.*

“ such land lets from 10 s. to 30 s. an
 “ acre more than the arable adjoining —
 “ it is a likely matter that landlords
 “ would allow such to be ploughed up !”
 he goes on] Softly, good Sir; there’s no
 denying matters of fact; I do tell you,
 that last season I saw some scores of acres
 of as fine meadow land as is most in
 England in tillage, in one parish; and
 it is the same again at this moment,
 though by the side of a fine river, and
 most part of it capable of being watered;
 and that it is too frequently done, I can
 prove to you on the testimony of a per-
 son, whose veracity our author must allow
 to be equal to his own. If he will take
 the trouble of turning to a certain book,
 called the Farmer’s Letters (an octavo
 volume, price 4 s. but now frequently
 to be found upon the stalls among the
 collections, pick and choose for a shilling)
 in page 290, he will find it thus written
 — “ The unprofitable practice of plowing
 “ up pastures, and not laying them
 “ down again, which is so universal in
 “ this country among farmers, whenever
 “ their landlords will allow it, tends
 “ perpetually to impoverish them. They
 “ are all to a man mad after ploughed
 “ lands, and would willingly break up
 “ every acre of grass in their farms.”

Now let any man compare these two accounts, could he possibly conceive they should be the product of the same brain. In the first he says, they are all mad for ploughed lands, and would willingly break up every acre of grass in their farms. In this pamphlet he says, To talk of ploughing up their rich meadow and pasture land is so manifest an absurdity, that it shews those who think so, to be totally ignorant of country business; wonderful indeed! diametrically opposite sentiments, and totally self-contradictory."

I have gone through the tedious task of copying this long passage, which means so little, in order to exhibit the subterfuges of a writer, who pretends to expose the errors of another. In the preceding pamphlet, I said not a syllable of the breaking up grass as dependant on *farmers*, but on *landlords*, and this so expressly that nothing but the meanness of false quotation, could have ventured such a piece of effrontery: in the Farmer's Letters, I say as expressly that farmers are eager to break up *whenever their landlords will allow it*. I desire to know wherein the opposition of these sentiments consists? In one I say, that

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landlords

landlords will not allow rich pastures to be broken up: in the other I assert, that farmers are ever ready to break up when landlords will allow it. These are facts, and co-existing facts; which nothing but malevolence or stupidity could misinterpret. But, "softly," — the gentleman speaks of *matters of fact*, he saw so-and-so — alas! alas! his matters of fact have been found so very apocryphal, that he need but prefix such an introduction to any assertion, to convince us at once, that he intends to give the reins to his fancy, and be as poetical as possible in his prose. He is the most lively *matter of fact man* I have lately met with. He saw some scores of acres of as fine meadow as most in England in tillage: pray where did he see it: let him name the place, and I doubt not of giving within a twelvemonth, a fairer account of the matter than he has done; and without concealing the name of the parish. But let me ask any one's common sense, if such a fact be possible, without attendant circumstances, that make it a mere exception? Did any landlord in his senses let scores of such fine meadow land to be ploughed up at the option of the tenant? A landlord may do such a thing for his own

own amusement, or to raise suddenly a larger sum of money, than the rent of the land would bring, or a tenant might purchase the liberty to break up some meadow, who had no arable; or for other reasons; but plainly to take the fact, as this man states it, *in answer to my argument*, I will venture totally to deny the possibility of the truth of it. It is all romance.

But let me ask Mr. Wimpey, while he is fighting with all his might and main, what assistance his argument reaped from informing his readers, that my Farmer's Letters, (once a 4s. octavo) was now upon stalls, pick and choose for a shilling? The point of the bounty had certainly much to do with this fact: — but, gentle reader, this also is one of his *matters of fact*. The third edition of that book (price 5 s.) is now printing; I leave it therefore to you to judge how common it must be on the stalls for a shilling. I mention it as an instance of this writer's candour; and to shew that a certain malevolence of temper, rather than the conviction of a sound cause, instigated him to publish his mistakes. In another place he calls my *Journey into Wales,*
and

and the North, a most elaborate insignificant work. Very probably it may be an insignificant work — perhaps too it is *pick and choose for a shilling*: but let me whisper in the ear of this accurate critic, that before he abuses the next book, let him read the title of it; I know of no Journey into Wales, and the North, nor have I ever made such a journey.

Page 27, he says, “nor is there any truth in his saying, that labour since the bounty has doubled its price; a fifth or sixth is nearer the truth.” I leave this debate to speak for itself: if called on, I will produce fifty proofs of the truth of my assertion: it is not only true, but the common idea of nine persons out of ten in the kingdom.

Page 30, he gives a list of importations from Holland, to shew how the Dutch, from cheapness of provisions, undersell us — “Gulix Hollands, fine threads, tapes, bobbins, peltries, Dutch lace, &c. the duties from 20 to 30 per cent. yet the consumption very great.” — “This, Sir, is chiefly if not entirely in the article labour, the difference of which is more per-
“ haps

“ haps than you can conceive ; these are
“ the facts ; these are the reasons that
“ shew high prices, and high rates of
“ provisions, an enemy to manufac-
“ tures.”

This is the common rubbish of *labour depending on provisions*, that has been refuted twenty times ; the author transcribes it from others, but when he makes the application of his thefts, then you are sure of seeing something that marks *self* ; thus *we are undersold by the Dutch, through cheapness of provisions*. But I shall inform the gentleman, that provisions are higher in the markets of Holland, than in any country in Europe ; much higher than ever known in England.

So much in answer to a pamphlet dictated rather by the spirit of prejudice, than that open, generous, and liberal principle of debate, which ought to conduct a man in the examination of a disputed subject, of so much consequence to the welfare of his country. The real effects of such a measure as the bounty, with a clear state of a free exportation, and all the concomitant circumstances,
demand

demand the most attentive examination. They should be debated upon enlarged and free principles; objections should be stated with candour, and answered with politeness; when truth alone is the object, the gentleman is not lost in the satirist; nor should private character be attacked to illustrate the good of our country. There is no subject that more demands this liberal debate, than the exportation of corn; and not being of importance to the prejudices of any particular party, none more likely to have it. I trust we shall see the subject thrown on a very different footing from what Mr. Wimpey has placed it in, by some future writer, who, disdaining to tread in such contracted paths, may open the way to a publick intercourse of opinion, that will leave the subject cleared from all errors and mistakes, and as precisely understood, as any matter of reasoning can be.

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Perhaps my readers may expect that I should offer a remark on the turn the exportation business took in the House
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of Commons, during the last sessions; but in truth no debate could afford less satisfaction. A witness whose knowledge was indisputable, proved, that the average price of wheat throughout the kingdom, was 1l. 12 s. per quarter, a degree of cheapness so clear, and rather unexpected, disarmed the enemies of exportation of most of those general arguments, which have so often been used when prices have been much higher: the friends of exportation urged the strongest reasons that could be produced in favour of the measure — they were unanswered; — reason never in any debate maintained a clearer superiority; — the trivial objections made by the gentlemen of the opposite opinion, were overturned as fast as they were started; and after many ostensible motives passing in harangue, the real one arose. The minister urged the discontents of the people being already great, and that the allowance of exportation would make them yet greater. In compliance with this hint, exportation was at once voted away, WHILE WHEAT WAS AT FOUR SHILLINGS A BUSHEL.

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APPENDIX.

But let the friends of so excellent a measure return with fresh spirit to the charge; and never give over their patriotic endeavours, till they place the corn trade of Britain on a permanent footing — on a footing that shall free it from those pernicious variations, which have of late years been such a disgrace to the domestic œconomy of this country.



FINIS.

